



Illinois Ethics Matters

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Honesty, Integrity, Service

**A newsletter from the Office of Executive Inspector General for the Agencies
of the Illinois Governor**

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Recent News

The Executive Ethics Commission recently released decisions and issued four redacted final reports related to the following matters investigated by the OEIG:

- *Meza v. Stermer*, 11-EEC-010, involved the former chief of staff for the Office of the Illinois Governor who engaged in prohibited political activity. Mr. Stermer was fined \$500.
- *Meza v. Harts*, 11-EEC-004, involved a former Illinois Gaming Board employee who made false statements to OEIG investigators. Ms. Harts was fined \$750.
- *In re: Brian Adams*, 09-01090, involved a Department of Juvenile Justice employee who engaged in prohibited political activity. Mr. Adams received a 10-day suspension.
- *In re: Vinod Gupta*, 10-00323, involved a former IDOT employee who engaged in prohibited political activity, among other things.
- *In re: Antonio Jones*, 10-00166, involved an IDOC employee who cheated on a State exam in violation of department policy. Mr. Jones' employment was terminated.
- *In re: Normajeane Niebur and Bobbie Fuels*, 10-00095, involved University of Illinois employees who engaged in prohibited political activity. Each was verbally reprimanded.

We encourage individuals to visit the OEIG website to read the full reports and decisions.

OEIG Oversees State Hiring Practices



required to ensure that State agencies comply with a 1990 United States Supreme Court decision that affects government employment practices. In the *Rutan* case, the Court held that public employers may not make employment decisions for non-policymaking positions on the basis of political party affiliation or support.

The OEIG has a team of attorneys and investigators specializing in cases involving *Rutan*-compliant employment interviews and procedures. Anyone with information about improper hiring or employment practices in State agencies is encouraged to contact the OEIG.

Neil P. Olson

Deputy Director & Chief of Springfield Division

OEIG In the News

A recent *Daily Herald* article ("State workers not fired for fireable offenses," August 8, 2011) discussed employee disciplinary actions imposed in response to OEIG investigations. The *Herald* correctly noted that actions taken by State agencies are sometimes at odds with OEIG recommendations.

By law, the OEIG investigates misconduct but does not have enforcement authority. When misconduct is uncovered, the OEIG issues a written report that includes:

- the allegations of misconduct;
- facts confirmed by the investigation;
- an analysis of the facts in comparison to the law; and
- findings and recommendations.

State agencies have the discretion to adopt OEIG's recommendations, which may include:

- termination;
- nonspecific disciplinary action;
- counseling or reminder to follow policy; and/or
- change to State agency policy or practice.

Ricardo Meza

Executive Inspector General

Calendar of Events: September 14, 2011 - Director of Investigations James Bonk will attend the Association of Inspectors General board meeting. September 28, 2011 - Executive Inspector General Ricardo Meza will be speaking to the State of Illinois Internal Audit Advisory Board in Springfield, IL. September 2011 - Release of OEIG's Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2011.